

Industrial Department Report for
month of October 1944

The Industrial Secretary's return, on October 8th from the National Urban League Conference (my full report of the Conference has been made), presented him with the fact that the salesgirl placed at Michaels Department Store had been fired. (The placement was discussed in last month's report.) Conference with officials at Michaels disclosed that the girl was fired for no other reason than her personal immaturity for the job. She worked there for three days, during which time it became evident that she was not satisfactory. In an interview at our office, the young lady recognized the difficulty, expressed gratefulness for what she had learned through our counselling and the three days at Michaels, and later in a letter stated that she has returned to school. We are still searching for Negro young ladies to refer as salesgirls.

The second attempt to have a meeting of the Industrial Committee was so completely unsuccessful, decision has been made with the chairman, to forego another attempt until the Industrial Secretary has had personal conferences with each person whose name is on the committee list.

Of significance during the month was the work of your Industrial Relations Secretary, as chairman of the Sub-Committee on Employment, for the Clinic on Racial and Religious Relations that was held at the Y.W.C.A. on November 9th and 10th. This was the use of an opportunity to do a job we felt sorely needed, and at the same time cooperate with official church bodies at their own request, on Employment Problems that the church here in the Newark area has never entered before. Excellent working relationships were established by your Secretary, with officials of private and governmental agencies, ministers, and industrial management personnel. No cooperation between these people and your Secretary had ever occurred before with some of these persons; with the others existing good relationships were strengthened. Although the Clinic was not held until November 9, it should be said in this October report that the success of the Employment section was ample reward for the time and special efforts of your Secretary. A permanent organization was agreed upon as a result of thorough work on problems of discrimination against and integration of persons of minority groups, in employment. Recommendations proposed by the committee and accepted by the participants in the open Employment Session were as follows:

1. That the Summary Committee delegate to Dr. Spencer Miller, or his duly appointed representative, the responsibility of expressing in writing to New Jersey congressmen in the Senate and the House of Representatives, to the committee on the establishment of a permanent Fair Employment Practice Commission, and to the President of the United States, its resolution that there be established a permanent commission on fair employment.

2. That a permanent State commission on fair employment be established in New Jersey.
3. That violations of the States civil rights law be referred directly to the Attorney General of the State of New Jersey for prosecution.
4. That the type of work done by the Sub-Committee on Employment be continued through the establishment of a permanent council on equal job opportunities; such council, to be comprised of labor, management, government, and private agencies operating in the field of employment, to be convened by the personnel of the Sub-Committee on Employment.

The development of facts showing the extent of Negro employment in Essex, Hudson, and Union counties, was completed. We now know the approximate number of Negroes employed, in a sample of some 270 companies, what percentage Negroes represent in these plants, and what effect we may expect on the income and work opportunity of the Negro group when reconversion sets in. For instance, we have determined that about 16,5270 more Negroes than whites will be out of work. The loss of the War Manpower Commission's regulations that effect some relief from discrimination in defense work; and (unless a permanent F.E.P.C. is established) the loss of F.E.P.C., discrimination after the war is going to become renewed in some companies. This will cause an even larger number of Negroes to be out of work. Our efforts should therefore be directed toward stimulation of management in Industry and Business, and union leaders in Labor, to continue what non-discriminatory practices operated at present and to eliminate discrimination now existing. During October your Secretary was in touch with about twenty-five individual management and labor representatives, on various problems, through which this goal was worked toward. Because of the other important phases of his work, your Secretary finds it utterly impossible to reach as increasingly large number of these people as he strongly feels must be worked with in order to help the post-war racial employment ratio continued at even its present status.

Interesting highlights of continuing work included cooperation with social service Worker from the State Hospital at Morristown, to effect re-introduction in community life, of an elderly man up for discharge after seven years care for a mental ailment; consultations on problems of integrating Negroes in 10 plants owned by a New York industrialist, in New Jersey; psychiatric interview with migrant (a 17 year old boy) from Florida with no address or means of support - requested by U.S.E.S. manager; institution of a union-activity program for non-participating workers - requested by the Local Union officials; invitation from the Welfare Federation to serve on Returning Veterans Committee - a result of your Secretary's current work on returning veterans problems; and, work toward reinstatement of an O.D.B. worker.